

To the Right Honorable the COMMONS in Parliament Assembled.

*The Humble Petition of James Hubbard, William Bottom, and John Turner,
Gent. and divers others, &c.*

Sheweth,

THat whereas there are divers good Laws and Statutes made by Parliaments in the late Reigns of Kings and Queens of *England*, for the Regulating and Management of Trading in this Kingdom, and amongst which Laws and Statutes so made and provided, there is for the Mystery or Calling of the Goldsmiths Company; by which Laws and Statutes so made, the Goldsmiths Company should not make, or cause to be made, and being so made by them, to be put to sale any Plate wrought of Gold or Silver; that should be beneath the fineness of Crown and Sterling, nor set in Gold any artificial Stones in Jewels or Rings: And accordingly the Company of the Goldsmiths have had from Kings and Queens their Charters granted to them; and also the Masters and Wardens, and all made Free of that Company, exercising the said Calling both in Citie and Countrey, do take an Oath to keep and observe the same; And that they should do so, the Kings did formerly, it being in their power so to doe, constitute, and set over the Goldsmiths an Assay-Master, which was to assay and touch all Plate of Gold and Silver, and Jewels, and Rings, made by any Goldsmith whatsoever: And upon the finding of it good, according to the Laws so made, the Kings Assay-Master did strike a mark upon it, which was to be done before put to sale. But so it is, that notwithstanding these Laws and Statutes, their Charters and Oaths, so made and taken, they do daily make and sell very much adulterated Plate of Gold and Silver that is very much beneath Crown and Sterling; and set in Gold Artificial Stones both in City and Countrey: Which for the better colouring of their fraudulent and evil Practises, they presume to strike and stamp the Kings mark upon it, which is the *Lion*, but how they come to use his Majesties mark, Your Petitioners do hope that this Honourable House will question the same; but so it is, that for want of an Assay-Master on the behalf of the King and Countrey, the Goldsmiths Company are left to be Judges in assaying their own Works, which is to the great dishonor of his Majesty, the great damage of his Subjects: And that it may so appear for Testimony thereof, Your Petitioners have diverse parcels of Plate, bought of the Masters and Wardens, and the Company of Goldsmiths, also Rings with Artificial Stones ready to present to this Honorable House. Assays made of the same by the Kings Majesties Assay-Master General, if they shall be required so to do.

The Premises considered, May this Honourable House be pleased to take into your serious Consideration, the unsufferable damages the Kings Majesties Subjects do daily sustain, and that the Offenders may be punished according to their deserts; and that his Majesty may have to himself his just Prerogative of setting an Assay-Master over the Goldsmiths, to Assay all Plate, and Jewels, and Rings already made, and that shall be made before put to sale, and to have what mark his Majesty shall be pleased to set upon all such Plate so Assayed: And for the Management of the said work of the Surveyor or Assay-Master, it is humbly desired, if this Honorable Assembly shall judge meet, to set one Penny upon the Ounce for assaying all Silver of all Natives or Freemen to pay, and double the value on all Forreigners, and the like per Ratum on all Gold for so assaying, &c. which is conceived will willingly be paid by the Buyer, being thereby ensured that he may not be connived, as now he generally is, above Twelve pence in laying out of Five shillings, besides Fashion, and what profit is allowed to them by Law to take, &c.

And your Petitioners shall daily pray, &c.